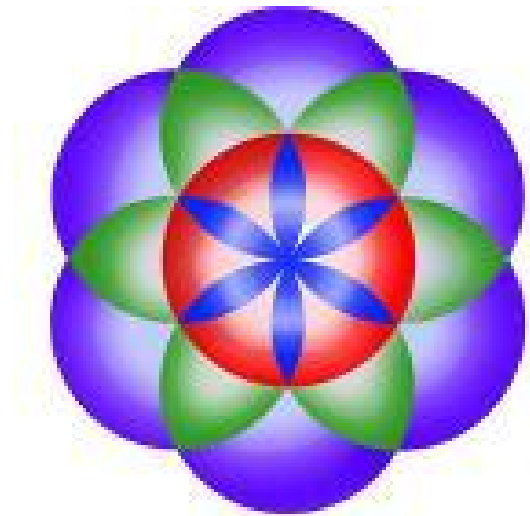


Emerson Waldorf School

Parent Handbook

2009-2010



**6211 New Jericho Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
Phone (919) 967-1858
Fax (919) 967-2732
High School Office Phone (919)-932-1195**

www.emersonwaldorfschool.org

Mission Statement

Emerson Waldorf School provides an integrated Waldorf curriculum and environment, which encourage and promote independent thinking and social responsibility, as well as academic and artistic excellence. The unique gifts and contributions of each child are honored through a developmentally appropriate awakening of thinking, feeling and willing. Further, the Emerson Waldorf School understands children as beings of body, soul, and spirit, and guides them to develop compassion and reverence for themselves and the world community.

MAIN OFFICE (919) 967-1858

Fax (919) 967-2732

Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE (919) 932-1195

Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

KINDERGARTEN OFFICE(919) 967-3362

Non-Discrimination Statement: The Emerson Waldorf School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition adjustment program, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

The Faculty and Administration reserve the right to amend these policies at any time with written notification to parents.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. About Emerson Waldorf School..... 4**
- II. Organization..... 4**
- III. Parent Organization..... 5**
- IV. Attendance..... 5**
- V. Communications/Publications 10**
- VI. Emergency Information..... 11**
- VII. Academic Expectations 12**
- VIII. Conduct and Discipline 15**
- IX. Administration..... 20**
- X: Curriculum 25**
- XI. Annual Events 31**
- XII: Festivals 32**
- XIII. Parent Roles and Responsibilities 34**
- XIV: Conflict Resolution Process for Parents..... 36**
- XV. Resources 37**

I. ABOUT EMERSON WALDORF SCHOOL

School History

Although we offered our first classes in the fall of 1984, the initiative behind the Emerson Waldorf School began nine years earlier. In 1975, parents and teachers with an interest in Waldorf Education began small groups to study and engage in activities together. In 1983, the Waldorf Education of North Carolina (WEANC) was founded, and it is still the governing body for the Emerson Waldorf School today. In 1984, we started our school with Kindergarten through Grade 3. The second and third graders were in two classrooms rented from a local church. After continued growth stabilized we reached the important decision to buy land and build a classroom building. A private partnership of parents and friends offered their personal collateral to secure financing for construction of the original 15-acre site.

By the fourth year, 1988, we already had an enrollment of 146 students. There were three Pre-Kindergarten /Kindergarten classes and Grades 1-4. We also became a member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). This began our pathway toward becoming a full member of AWSNA, the national organization of Waldorf Schools.

In 1993 we purchased an additional ten acre parcel adjacent to the school where the current Kindergarten is located. We built our West Wing project in phases as money was raised by community labor. The first phase was completed in 1993, and the entire building finished in 1998.

In 2000, we made another watershed decision: to start our High School. We began a Capital Campaign to raise funds for several improvements to our campus: our Handwork and Music buildings, infrastructure improvements, and a new classroom building for the High School. Our first ninth grade class began in the fall of 2002, but the new classroom building wasn't ready for over a year. This class mirrored the experience of our first grade school classes by holding classes in rented rooms in a church and then moving to a trailer on Spence's Farm.

In 2002, the school purchased the farm across the road from our property to provide sports fields and land on which to build farming and gardening programs.

Our first High School graduation was held in June 2006, with a class of fourteen. During that year, we also started our Nursery and Morning Garden programs, thus completing our vertical expansion as a school. A building to house these early childhood programs was opened in January 2007. We now offer programs for children from ages one (Parent-Child program) through twelfth grade.

II. ORGANIZATION

Waldorf schools do not use a traditional hierarchical governance structure, instead, interrelated bodies work together to administer and govern the school.

The College of Teachers provides oversight to the school's curriculum development, pedagogical policy, program administration, faculty hiring and dismissal and professional development. The College of Teachers is the decision-making body in these areas and decisions are made by consensus. Decisions that overlap Board responsibilities are shared between the Board and College.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the legal and financial well-being of the school. It is composed of parents, faculty, and community members. The Board is the decision-making body in the realm of finances and with regard to legal considerations.

The Faculty is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the classrooms, for presenting the curriculum, festivals, and for working directly with the children and parents. The class teachers and subject teachers work together to create an integrated approach to the student's learning.

The Administrative Staff carries out the decisions and standing policies of the Board and College and strive to serve the needs of the faculty, parents, and students. They include the Administrator, Finance Director, Director of Admissions, Administrative Specialist, Administrative Assistant, High School Administrative Assistant, Facilities Maintenance Manager, and Director of Development.

III. PARENT ORGANIZATION

The Parent Organization (PO) serves as the vehicle for full parent involvement in the life of the school community. Every parent is a member of the PO and active involvement is urged and welcomed from each family. With an energetic and skilled parent body such as ours, the time and talents that can be directed to all spheres of school life will help develop Emerson Waldorf School to its full potential for our children. Recently, the focus of the PO has shifted from fundraising to a more community-based, hands-on approach. Three committees carry out PO activities. The committees are:

Heads: The Heads Committee focuses on parent education and opening up clear lines of communication. This includes setting up speakers and forums.

Hearts: The Hearts Committee is the warmth of the PO. Their aim is community building and outreach, and intentions to cultivate friendship, hospitality, and gratitude. They coordinate the welcoming of new parents and help organize festivals and celebrations throughout the year.

Hands: The Hands Committee is actively involved with the physical aspects of the school. Their energies are directed toward building maintenance, beautification, and safety.

IV. ATTENDANCE

Arrival

Each student begins the day with a greeting between child and teacher and a morning verse. Ideally, students will arrive at the school with adequate time prior to the bell so that they may gracefully greet their teacher and schoolmates. Arriving late may affect the child's day adversely, and is disruptive to the class in general.

Supervision in the classroom begins at 8:00 a.m. If you arrive before 8:00 a.m., please stay with your child until 8:00 a.m. Classes for grades 1-5 begin at 8:30 a.m. Middle School classes (grades 6-8) begin at 8:15 a.m. For Nursery through grade Eight (8) students, if you arrive late, please wait with your child outside the classroom until you obtain permission from the teacher for the child to enter. Children should not be left unattended. An adult must accompany kindergarten children to their classrooms. Please call the school office if your child is absent and, when a late arrival is anticipated, please notify the class teacher in writing in advance. Students who arrive late in grades 1-8 must go to the office to receive a tardy slip. (See "Attendance Rules").

Note: Students in Nursery should arrive at school no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and no later than 9:00 a.m. Students in Kindergarten should arrive at school no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and no later than 8:30 a.m. Students in grades 1-5 should arrive at school no later than 8:25 a.m. to be ready for class at 8:30 a.m. Students in grades 6-8 should arrive at school no later than 8:10 a.m. to be ready for class at 8:15 a.m.

High School students should arrive by 8:10 a.m. Please notify the appropriate school office before 8:00 a.m. if your child will be absent that day.

Departure

Official grade school dismissal time is 3:15 p.m. every week day. The “grace period” for picking up your child is until 3:25 p.m. at which time remaining children in Grades 1-8 will be sent to the After School Program and charges will be applied.

For your child’s safety, it is our policy to dismiss a child only to the parent or regular car pool driver. Any change in the usual pick-up procedure should be communicated in writing to your class teacher. Please refrain from asking the office staff to notify your child of last minute car pool changes. A phone call will be acceptable in an emergency. When picking up your child in grades Nursery through Four (4) please come to the classroom door and accompany your child through campus to the car. Please refrain from talking about your child to the teacher in front of other parents and children. If you need to speak with your teacher, call or email him/her for a conference. Children are not allowed in the parking lot without an adult.

To reduce dust for pedestrians and maintain safety throughout the designated driving areas and parking lots, please drive at a safe speed not to exceed 10MPH.

Grades 1-8 End-of-Day Dismissal Procedure

For reasons of safety and liability, the School must supervise all students while they are on the Emerson Waldorf School campus.

Students who live in the neighborhood and walk home must have a letter of permission on file in the office. When dismissed from their classes, students in Grades 5-8 may walk to the benches to await pick-up by their parents.

Students waiting at the benches need to listen for the After School bell that rings at 3:25 p.m. Any students from Grades 1-8 remaining at the benches when the After School bell rings must sign in to After School.

There is no parking in the pick up/drop off circle at any time. If you wish to park to pick up or drop off your child, please use the parking lots. Parking in handicapped spaces is by permit only.

Sports Program: After school sports participants must wait for their coach at a prearranged place but not at the benches.

No students may wait at the Woodland Cottage or the upper parking lots.

Students who remain at the benches after the bell for any reason or are found at the Woodland Cottage or the upper parking lots will be signed in for After School that day and assessed the After School fee. The names of these students will be sent to the class teacher.

We ask that parents who wish to stay and talk move with their children to the First Grade fenced play area because the rest of the playground is reserved for the After School program. Parents are responsible to watch their children in the play area. Please remember our playground rules apply after school as well. (See Section VII, “Playground Rules”)

After School Program Grades 1-8

The After School Program is available to Nursery and Kindergarten children as a Nap Program from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. and as After School for Grades 1-8 from 3:25 to 6:00 p.m. We feel that a rhythmical program of activities for the children is essential to their well being and security. We ask, therefore, that parents minimize “drop-ins” or sporadic attendance in the Program. Parents should sign their child up for a particular schedule and stick to that schedule. All scheduling changes need to be communicated to the Main Office. Grade school children not picked up from school by 3:25 p.m. will automatically go to After School care and will be billed accordingly. Kindergarten children in After School care must be picked up no later than 3:00 p.m.; grade school children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. There will be a late pick-up charge. Payments for the After School Program are in addition to the tuition payments. They will be automatically billed to your TADS account.

Attendance Records

Accurate attendance records are maintained on file in the Administration Offices as required by State Law.

Attendance Rules

Attendance Policy

The curriculum is created to promote a rhythmical unfolding of the day, the week, and the year that then allows learning to take place in a balanced way. By promoting regular attendance, we allow the student to experience what has been designed for him or her.

Please note that assemblies and performance events require the participation of each student in the designated class. *Parents are asked to schedule appointments and trips around those important class- and community-building events. That same courtesy should be extended to subject classes as well.

The Emerson Waldorf School consulted the North Carolina Education Code in structuring this policy.

For the student's protection, parents are required to call the school office by 8:30 a.m. on the same day of his or her absence from school.

** "Parent" refers to a person standing in parental relation to the child.*

Excused absences include:

1. Illness
2. A serious illness or death of immediate family member
3. Mandated medical appointments (e.g., medical procedures or specialist appointments that cannot happen at any other time) accompanied by a physician's note (or other relevant medical personnel's) note**
4. Observance of religious holidays
5. Those mandated by the School (e.g., conjunctivitis, lice, pertussis, etc.)

When returning to school after being absent, the student is required to bring a written note to the teacher. If a note is not received by the teacher, the absence is considered unexcused. The teacher(s) will consider a grade appropriate plan for making up the work missed.

*** It is asked that standard medical and dental appointments be scheduled after school.*

Unexcused absences include:

1. An absence that is not accompanied by a note to explain the circumstances
2. Vacations
3. Home days

In grades six through twelve, missed work from an unexcused absence must be completed.

A half-day is indicated in the student's records if he or she arrives by 11:00 a.m. and is present for the remainder of the day or is present until 12:00 p.m. and then leaves.

Upon the first unexcused absence of a given semester (August through December or January through June), the class teacher or high school academic advisor contacts the parent(s). Upon the third unexcused absence, the Administrator sends a letter to the parents. Upon the fifth unexcused absence, a conference will be held among the parents, class teacher or high school academic advisor, college chair, and administrator to create an attendance plan. (Please note that a student in grades six through twelve will attend such meeting with the group.) Upon the seventh unexcused absence of a given semester, the parents, class teacher or high school academic advisor, college chair, and the administrator will convene to understand if this school experience meets the family's needs. Further unexcused absences can impact the student's enrollment at the Emerson Waldorf School. The College of Teachers, the pedagogical section of the school, will consider if the student's educational needs are being met and assess the family's commitment to the school's mission to make a final determination about the student's enrollment at Emerson Waldorf School.

More than ten (10) excused or unexcused absences accrued in a given semester can also impact the student's enrollment at the school. The same process of review by the College of Teachers as mentioned above will be followed to determine the student's enrollment at Emerson Waldorf School.

Since there is a need to support a gradual and flexible approach for the younger child, Early Childhood will provide an addendum to these policies.

Early Childhood's Addendum: In Early Childhood vacations and home days must be pre-approved by the teacher to be counted as an excused absence.

Children in the Kindergarten and Nursery who have not arrived by 9:00 a.m. and do not have a mandated medical appointment should remain at home that day and it will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Children who have been designated as a rising Grade One student by the second Parent/Teacher Conference will now be asked to adhere to the whole school attendance and tardy policy.

Additional requirements and consequences for high school students will be added as an addendum to these policies.

High School Addendum: Students are responsible for all content and assignments missed during absence. A student missing more than 20 percent of class time – in any class – due to unexcused absences will lose credit for that class. This means that in a three-week Main Lesson Block, a student may miss three (3) classes without loss of credit. In a four-week block, a student may miss four (4) classes without loss of credit. The same basic formula applies to track classes and afternoon classes. When a student loses credit, he or she will be expected nonetheless to complete the work of the class and will receive a grade for the work completed. That grade will be reported on their transcript with an explanation as to why credit is not being recorded.

Any combination of excused or unexcused absences exceeding 30 percent of the class time will result in loss of credit. This means that a student may miss four (4) days in a three week block or six (6) days in a four-week block before credit is forfeited.

Students leaving campus or the High School building must check out at the office. No students will be released without parental consent and arrangement, including times of illness or scheduled medical treatment. Skipping classes or leaving the building or campus without permission will result in detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Tardy Policy

To support the rhythmic life of each student, on-time arrival to school is imperative. To begin the school day as a unified whole is a committed effort that profoundly affects the habit life of the class and the individual student. This effort will help the students establish good habits, a rhythmic relationship to time, and a strong will that can serve them in their educational journey.

The school day begins promptly at:

- 8:10 in grades nine through twelve
- 8:15 in grades six through eight
- 8:30 in grades one through five

Each student who arrives late to school will first need to visit the appropriate office. The student must have a late pass to enter the classroom. If a student arrives later than the time specified, he or she will wait outside the classroom so as not to disrupt the flow of the lesson and allow the group to begin the day together, which includes the morning verse. To maintain the integrity of the lesson, the teacher will welcome the tardy student or students as a group into the classroom within a ten-minute period from when school begins.

In grades one through eight, a student who arrives late needs to be accompanied by a parent to the classroom.

Upon the first tardy of a given semester (August through December or January through June), parents will be contacted by the teacher. Upon the third tardy of a given semester, the school administrator will send a written notice to the parents. Upon the fifth tardy of a given semester, a conference will be scheduled among the parents, class teacher or high school academic advisor, college chair, and the administrator to dialogue about an alternative approach so as to ensure punctuality is maintained. (Please note that a student in grades six through twelve will attend such meeting with the group.) Upon the seventh tardy of a given semester, the parents, class teacher or high school academic advisor, college chair, and the administrator will convene to understand if this school experience meets the family's needs. Further tardies can impact the student's enrollment at the Emerson Waldorf School. The College of Teachers, the pedagogical section of the school, will consider if the student's educational needs are being met and assess the family's commitment to the school's mission to make a final determination about the student's enrollment at Emerson Waldorf School.

Since there is a need to support a gradual and flexible approach for the younger child, early childhood will provide an addendum to these policies.

Early Childhood Addendum: In the Kindergarten and Nursery tardies will be noted in the attendance record and teachers will contact the parents if it is a chronic situation.

Additional requirements and consequences for high school students will be added as an addendum to these policies.

High School Addendum: Students are expected to arrive at school and check in at the office no later than 8:10 a.m. and join the morning circle before it begins at 8:15 a.m. "Check-in" at the office is the time to

deliver to the High School Administrative Assistant any notes that will excuse them during the course of the day for medical or other appointments.

- Failure to check in at the office, whether arriving late or on time, will result in being marked absent.
- Checking in after the bell will result in being marked tardy. When tardy, the student does not attend circle that morning.
- Three tardies to morning circle will result in detention. For seniors, more than one tardy to morning circle in a week will result in a loss of Off-Campus Lunch privilege for that week.
- Students missing 50 percent or more of any class period will be marked as absent.
- Three tardies for any class are marked as an absence.

Transportation

Once the transportation schedule has been arranged, it is important that it remain consistent. Experience has shown that children who are unsure of their ride home have very insecure days at school. If someone else will be picking up your child, you must notify your child's class teacher in writing.

V. COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLICATIONS

School Directory

The school directory is published annually and distributed to parents at the beginning of the academic school year. The information in the directory is to be used for school purposes only. Use of the information in the directory for business use is not allowed. Please notify the Main Office of any changes to your personal information on file.

Parent Handbook

A Parent Handbook is provided to every family that attends Emerson Waldorf School. Revisions occur periodically and will be posted on the website to download.

High School Student/Parent Handbook

Each High School family receives a handbook containing the policies and procedures that are specific to the high school. High School students and parents must sign a form confirming they have read the handbook and agree to abide by its regulations.

Class Parent Email Lists

Each class at the Emerson Waldorf School has a class email list maintained by the Class Parent. Information that is important to share within the class is done so in this manner. To add or change your email, please notify your teacher or your class parent.

School Newsletter

The Emersonian and The Gnome News are the bridge between school and home life and its purpose is to provide information of interest to the Emerson Waldorf School community as well as serve as a communication tool for school policy, activities and events, and parent sharing. It is distributed on a regular basis by website posting, email, and for students to take home if requested in the office. Announcements of parent meetings and other school events will generally be communicated in the Emersonian, Gnome News or on the website rather than by letter. The High School has a one page bulletin called The Gnomenachrichten that is published and emailed the first of each month.

Website/Online Calendar

The most up-to-date and current information about events, class schedules, emergency closings, etc. is found on our website: www.emersonwaldorf.org. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the website and to use it on a daily basis to stay informed on changes in policies and events. You will also find on our school's website a link to our online calendar or you can go directly to www.calendarwiz.com/emersonwaldorf to keep up to date on all school events and athletic events.

Class Meetings

Class meetings are an integral part of the school life. Attendance at these meetings is required of at least one parent. They are an important bridge between home and school, and offer parents an opportunity to view and talk about their children's work and to participate in the type of activities done in the class. These meetings include discussion on various aspects of Waldorf education. They also serve as social gatherings for parents. If you are unable to attend these meetings, please notify your child's teacher.

Telephones and Messages

Students are not permitted to use school phones unless they have a note from their class teacher. School phones are for school business only. Please arrange changes in transportation, classmate visits, medical/dental appointments, etc., well enough in advance for your child to know before he or she comes to school. The school offices are not responsible for relaying any non-emergency messages. The new voice mail system makes it easy for teachers and staff to receive messages. Cell phone use is prohibited during school hours.

VI. EMERGENCY INFORMATION

All students are required to have a current Emergency Form and immunization records (or religious exemption waiver) on file in the school office.

Injury at School

All staff members at the Emerson Waldorf School are CPR and First Aid certified. In the event of scraped knees, bruises, or scratches, the office staff or teacher will administer first aid. The school does not administer any topical or oral medication unless written permission is granted by the parent on the emergency form filed in the main office. In the event of a medical emergency, the school will endeavor to contact the parents, and will call 911 if necessary, as indicated on the emergency information form.

Insurance

All students at the Emerson Waldorf School are covered by an accident insurance policy. This is a secondary policy, yet it covers expenses that the family's primary health coverage does not cover. It covers medical expenses for an accidental injury incurred on the school grounds or while on a field trip or a school sponsored activity.

Illness

An ill child should be kept at home. Please call the school office by 8:30 a.m. any day your child will be absent. If a child becomes ill while at school, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. The school does not have facilities to care for children who come to school too ill to remain in class. The school staff is not permitted to administer any medicine without written parental permission. Approval for administering medicine, including homeopathic remedies, aspirin, or topical first aid treatments is part of the Emergency Form on file. Children should remain at home for 24 hours after a fever breaks.

Any child who contracts a contagious illness such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, or strep throat, must be kept at home until the illness is no longer in the contagious state. Please inform your class teacher of

the illness so that other parents can be alerted. A note from your health care provider stating the date your child may return to school is required to be submitted to the main office prior to the child's return.

Any child who contracts a communicable disease such as head lice, pink eye, impetigo, ringworm, pertussis, flu or pinworms must be receiving medical treatment before returning to school. In the case of head lice, all lice and eggs (nits) must be removed from the child's hair after treatment and before returning to school.

Inclement Weather Closings

A decision to close school due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions will be made by 6:00 a.m. The message on the school's message system will indicate if school is closed (967-1858 x49). The school will follow closing or delayed opening decisions from any of the following school districts: Orange County, Durham County, or Chapel Hill/Carrboro. If Emerson Waldorf School must close for any other reason, information concerning the school's status will be on radio stations 1360 AM, 91.5 FM and television channels 5 and 11 (note: WRAL's website lists Emerson Waldorf School closing information at www.wral.com/weather/closings/). It is the parent's responsibility to be informed of the opening status of school—there will be no parent phone trees to notify of morning closures or delayed openings. The school's message line and website are generally the most reliable sources for information on school closings. In the event of school closure, Nursery through High School is closed.

Delayed Opening

When a "2 hour delay" is announced, school will start at 10:30; earliest drop off is at 10:15 a.m. Note that any day the school has a delayed opening, there is the possibility that After School will close early and that extracurricular activities will be cancelled. Regarding extracurricular and evening activities—a decision to continue or cancel extracurricular activities will be made by 10:15 a.m.

Closure After School in Session

If you feel that weather and driving conditions are deteriorating once school is in session, please feel free to call the office to arrange early pickup of your child. In the event of an early closure, please check the media outlets listed above for announcements. Please make sure that the school has the most up-to-date contact information for your child in case you are unaware of closing and we need to contact you.

Disaster Preparedness

Fire: In accordance with Orange County requirements, periodic fire drills are conducted so that the children and teachers learn how to exit from the building in an expedient and safe manner.

Tornado: The Orange County Fire Protection District will notify the school of a tornado warning. Periodic drills are conducted throughout the school year so that faculty and staff can mobilize children to a safe area.

VII. ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Homework

Homework is given to strengthen the child's ability to work independently. Homework should also be a quiet opportunity to review what was presented in the morning lesson. It is ideal for each child to have a quiet space consistently available to do homework at the same time each day, afternoon or evening. The more this is established, the easier it will be for your child to successfully manage the work in the higher grades. Homework usually begins in grade 3 or 4 with occasional short assignments. From 6th grade on, homework will be given on a regular basis. Your support in helping to ensure that homework arrives at school in a timely manner will be beneficial until children have established their own routines and

responsibilities. Students and parents should expect there to be daily homework in Middle School and High School.

- If a student is absent the day an assignment is given, he or she should, upon their return, approach the class teacher for missed notes and assignments.
- If a student is having difficulty completing assignments on time, he or she must speak with the teacher and ask for assistance.
- Teachers expect students, not their parents, to take primary responsibility for speaking with teachers around matters of homework, extensions, etc.
- Middle School students who do not complete homework may be required to attend study hall during after school hours.
- Guidelines regarding High School academic expectations are specified in the High School Student Parent Handbook.

Lower and Middle School Evaluations

In the Lower School and Middle School, letter grades are not assigned. Waldorf School reports are given in the form of narrative progress descriptions covering the child's participation in class, interests, student habits, educational progress, as well as the areas that need attention and require improvement. Each student receives a comprehensive report at the end of the school year. These reports include class teacher observations as well as comments by all Subject teachers. In addition to the year-end report, two parent/teacher conferences are held throughout the school year. (See school calendar)

Waldorf education is concerned with the whole child as a developing human being. For this reason Emerson Waldorf School does not rely on standardized testing as an evaluation tool. Strengths and weaknesses may actually show much more clearly through artistic activities, muscular coordination, or speech patterns. A part of the weekly faculty meetings is devoted to evaluating individual children from many teachers' perspectives, which provides a more comprehensive picture.

High School Evaluations

Teachers write grade reports at the conclusion of each block and at the mid-term and conclusion of all track classes. Reports are mailed to parents on a regular basis. If a student is struggling in a course, the teacher will contact parents as soon as the problem is identified.

Letter grades are assigned for all classes and grades are scaled from A to F (4 point scale) with plus or minus grades assigned. Grade Point Averages are calculated for college admission purposes and transcripts can be reviewed by the family and others designated by the family with advance notice of forty-eight hours.

There are no Honors or AP classes, and there is no ranking of students.

Cumulative High School transcripts are sent home each June after all grades have been entered. Parents and students are asked to carefully review transcripts for errors or omissions and immediately report any problems to the HS Counselor.

All grades, reports, records of disciplinary actions, complaints, and honors become a part of the student's permanent record.

In accordance with all-school policy, family accounts with Emerson Waldorf School must be paid in full for grade reports to be mailed home and for official documents such as transcripts and letters of recommendation to be sent to colleges and other institutions.

Tutoring

If you wish tutoring for your child in grades 1-8, please contact your child's class teacher. For High School students, contact the student's advisor regarding tutoring. All tutoring fees are in addition to tuition and are to be arranged by parents with the tutor.

Media

Emerson Waldorf School is dedicated to nurturing children's capacities for imagination, healthy feeling, independent thinking, and active willing. Because we recognize the debilitating effects that media, including television, movies, video games, and computers can have on the development of those capacities, we ask that parents of Emerson Waldorf School children eliminate media exposure during the school week. Your class teacher will provide recommendations on how to carry that out at home. Portable electronic devices are prohibited on Emerson Waldorf School campus, except when allowed at the High School for specific activities.

Videotaping and Photographing Policy for the Grades School

The elementary grades student, age seven to 14, is educated through the rich imaginative pictures of the various stories told by the class teacher. From the stories, events such as class plays, festivals, and more are lived into by the child very strongly. That experience of hearing the story, practicing the play, or walking into the Spiral of Light is the experience and of the utmost importance. In addition, the stage of development of an elementary grades child should not encourage self-consciousness as experienced by an older student.

In recognition of this stage of development and as part of our endeavor to protect the sanctity of childhood, the grades school does not allow the videotaping or photographing of any class event, including class plays, assemblies, festivals, and official ceremonies such as the Rose Ceremony and eighth grade graduation.*

This policy benefits the parents and other guests attending class events. The audience members are given the opportunity to fully attend to the moment and what is unfolding before them, a priceless gift for all involved to receive.

There are some situations, however, in which still photography is permissible. Those include non-performance class events, such as Field Day, field trips, and school fairs. In addition, a designated photographer is permissible after a class event has occurred. For example, a group picture after a class play or the picture of the class teacher and child with rose in hand after the Rose Ceremony, and such.

If you have a question regarding when photography is permissible, please consult with your class teacher.

**Please note that some events will be documented by the school for outreach or internal purposes. A signed enrollment contract gives the school permission to use these photographs. Parents must send written notice to the school if they prefer to opt out of this permission.*

Videotaping and Photographing Policy for the High School

The High School recognizes that parents and students might have legitimate interests in capturing video images of certain critical events, such as class plays and graduation. The High School believes that students have become sufficiently mature and self-possessed to accept and work with the presence of a fixed video camera. The faculty would require, however, that videography of plays be done by one individual granted permission by the High School. Initial distribution of the video would be the responsibility of the High School although we would not manage or prohibit further distribution.

VIII. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Grades Dress Code

Because clothing is part of the class environment, we expect our dress policy to help create an atmosphere conducive to learning, focusing attention on the children and not their clothing. The faculty reserves the right to decide if dress and appearance constitute a distraction. If a child is not dressed appropriately, parents may be called to bring a change of clothing before the child is permitted in the classroom. In High School we know that dress and fashion are important forms of self-expression. See the High School Student/Parent Handbook for details on the High School dress code.

General Guidelines

- Clothing should be well fitted—not so large that it extends over hands or feet. Likewise, clothing should not be overly short, tight, backless or strapless. Wide, sagging, overlong, baggy or mesh shorts or pants are unacceptable. Boys may not wear sleeveless shirts. No writing on any garments except for Waldorf school t-shirts, or shirts commemorating Emerson Waldorf School cultural or athletic events.
- Clothing may not have tears, stains, holes, or unfinished edges (such as cut-off jeans). Inside-out shirts or tops are not acceptable.
- As the children go outside every day, please send along appropriate gear i.e., raincoat, hood, hat, boots, warm coat, mittens or gloves, and leg coverings. Shorts are not acceptable in winter.
- Label clothing with your child's name, especially outerwear.

Acceptable patterns, colors, and designs for K-8

- Solid colors, overall patterns, stripes, and soft natural images are acceptable.
- Small discreet outer brand labels and sports logos must fit within the circle of the teacher's finger and thumb of one hand.
- Not Acceptable patterns, colors, and designs: Advertising, team logos, words, numbers, cartoon drawings, camouflage, neon colors are not acceptable.

Acceptable length

- Shirts should be long enough to cover the midriff area even when stretching. Shorts should come approximately to mid-thigh length or no shorter than where the tip of the index finger rests when the arm is alongside the body. Skirts and dress hems and side slits should be no more than 4" above the knee. Sleeveless shirts and dresses should have at least a 2" wide strap.

Other

- No underwear should be visible, including boxer shorts and bra straps, including sports bras
- Shoes should have non-slip soles and should be sturdy enough for vigorous outside play.
- Laces should be tied, not dragging.
- Platform shoes, flip-flops, and jellies are not permitted. Crocs may only be worn inside.
- Inside shoes should be provided if street shoes are removed in the classroom.
- No bare feet on campus at any time.
- No make-up or nail polish before 8th grade; discreet make-up and nail polish in 8th grade.
- No hair coloring or extreme hair styles.
- Jewelry should be tasteful and not distracting.
- Watches are for 3rd grade and above, after telling time is introduced. Watches with dial faces rather than digital watches are recommended. No beeping watches.
- Writing and drawing on clothing and skin is not permitted.
- Body piercing other than ears is not permitted.
- Sunglasses, hats and head coverings, except for religious purposes, should not be worn in the classroom.

Grades Assembly Dress

Assembly clothes should be clean, pressed semi-formal school attire. Parents are asked to support our efforts to create a special event for the whole school: parents will be called and asked to bring a change of clothes for children who are not dressed properly for an assembly.

- Boys are to come to school in shirts with collars and buttons, pants (not jeans) and a belt.
- Shirts are to be tucked in.
- Girls are to come in a skirt, dress, or nice pants- not jeans.

High School Dress Code

Our dress policy helps to create an atmosphere in which attention is focused on learning and positive interaction, not clothing. The Dress Code applies to any and all school events, whether the events happen during the school day, in the evening, on the weekends, or off-campus. The faculty reserves the right to make exceptions for specific events.

Clothing worn by EWHHS students, faculty and staff is comfortable, well fitted, and functional for the various activities of the day. Daily attire must be modest, neat, clean, and professional. Students are expected to dress appropriately for all classes. This may require additional clothing which may be different from daily dress and is appropriate for physical exertion or messy activities.

Unacceptable dress and ornamentation:

- Clothing extending over hands and/or feet
- Shorts, skirts, and side slits higher (shorter) than fingertip length along the thigh
- Any sleeveless shirts for boys
- Sleeveless shirts and dresses for girls with straps less than 1.5 inches wide
- Anything that exposes – even in stretching – midriff, cleavage, underwear, or bra straps (including sports bras)
- Bare feet or flip flops.
 - *NOTE: Closed-toed shoes must be worn for outdoor activities, movement classes, labs, and practical arts. Students are advised to keep a pair of closed-toed shoes in their lockers.*
- Clothing with offensive, violent, or drug- and alcohol-related images and/or words
- Torn or stained clothing; cut-off sleeves and pant-legs
- Sleepwear, bathrobes, and slippers
- Distracting hairstyles or unnatural hair color
- Hats and sunglasses worn indoors or at opening and closing circle. This includes sunglasses worn on the head.
- Distracting jewelry; visible jewelry in piercings other than in the ears; visible body ornamentation, including tattoos, scarification, henna and other painting of or drawing on the skin

High School Special Event and Assembly Dress

The Rose Ceremony and other special events require more formal dress than day-to-day classroom wear. Students must follow the dress code standards in regard to hemline length and strap width. Girls must wear a dress, skirt or dressy slacks with a blouse that adheres to the dress code. Boys must wear dress pants and a polo-style or other buttoned, collared shirt. No shorts, T-shirts, heels more than 1.5 inches high, flip-flops, or sneakers for either gender are permitted at the Rose Ceremony and other special school events, whether on- or off-campus. Inappropriately dressed students will not be allowed to participate until they change clothes.

Discipline Policy for Grades 1-8

A sense for authority and discipline in a Waldorf School is an important and integral part of the curriculum. Pedagogical classroom management, an aesthetic sense of order, and appropriate consequences for misbehavior aid the child's self-discipline. The philosophy on discipline at Emerson Waldorf School emphasizes a positive approach, in which the student is gradually led toward an experience of self-discipline. We expect students to behave in a respectful way toward teachers, staff, classmates, and the property of others. Each teacher is fully responsible for the discipline in his or her classroom.

Students will be approached in a dignified manner and asked to comply with the standards of misbehavior. If the behavior continues, a conference with teachers, parents, or student will be held and a plan of action created. Emerson Waldorf School reserves the exclusive right to discipline children (including dismissal) for neglect of school work, excessive absenteeism, poor student citizenship (including misconduct), or failure to follow the rules and regulations of the School. Consequences for misbehavior will be age-appropriate. We do not use physical punishment.

Discipline Policy for the Nursery and Kindergarten

Childhood is a time for the child to learn about the world we live in, as well as to relate to others in a group. Feelings are strong in childhood and we try to encourage children to express their feelings in ways that help themselves and others. Anger is a natural feeling, but "people and things are not for hurting" Memories are short, however, and the discipline of "time out" is the usual procedure. "Time out" is the removal of a child for a short period of time - 3 to 5 minutes - from a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to a request to stop the behavior. The time out space, usually a chair, is located away from classroom activity, and is always under the constant supervision of a teacher. During time out, the child is given the chance to think about the misbehavior that led to his removal from the group and frequently, this is an opportunity for the child simply to calm down. When the child returns to the group that is the end of the incident and the child is treated with the same love and respect as other children. We do not spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise punish the children.

Sometimes, young children "forget" to go to the bathroom and accidents happen. When this happens, we quickly, quietly, and privately help the child change into clean clothes with the quiet reassurance that this sometimes happens to everyone and that there is nothing to be embarrassed about. Children are never shamed or punished when bathroom accidents occur.

At naptime, children are encouraged to completely relax, and if they can, to sleep, but once again, they are never punished for refusing to sleep.

We do not leave the children alone, unattended, or otherwise without supervision.

If a child continually shows distress through aggressive behavior, the kindergarten teacher will meet with the parents to gain an understanding of the child and of what may be causing the problems. The kindergarten teacher may recommend changes in the child's routine or diet or consultation with experts in child development. If the distress continues, the child will be given a six-week probation period. This is often long enough to show improvement or it may be decided that another setting would be more helpful for both the child and the school. We expect parents to understand this procedure and to be willing to cooperate so that we can provide the best solution for your child. In the last resort, if it is found necessary for the child to leave the school, the College will make the final decision.

The above statement is identical to the discipline statement Nursery and Kindergarten parents are required to sign and return to the school.

Playground Rules for Nursery and Kindergarten

We all know how important consistency is for all children of all ages. We would like to share the rules the teachers have developed over the years and ask the community's help in following through with these rules at all times children are on the playground:

- Children may not climb on the fences or in trees.
- The maximum number of children on the tire swing is three. If one child is on, and another wishes to get on, they must make room and agree how they are going to swing. Children also need to sit on the swing and not stand, lie or hang. Wild behavior on or off the swing will not be tolerated.
- Sitting is also recommended for the individual swings, no standing, kneeling, belly laying, or twisting is safe for this age group.
- Running in the area of the swings, sandbox, slide, and climbing platform is dangerous. Please have children run in the grassy area.

Children must be supervised at all times. If you are volunteering, working or attending a meeting, you must be able to see or hear your child(ren) or ask another person to supervise them outside. Any adult on the playground is to be respected as an authority and listened to. Please be considerate of sleeping children from 12:45 to 2:30 p.m. Please take all your things and trash with you and report broken things to the kindergarten teachers. Please do not open the toy shed and remove toys to use without the permission of the Nursery and Kindergarten Teachers.

Playground Rules for Grades 1-8

- Cursing is not permitted.
- No excluding. All interested students of eligible age must be allowed to play, including organized games such as basketball, soccer and football. Individual players should not monopolize games.
- A group may not monopolize an area of the playground for an extended number of days.
- Riding wheeled toys (bikes, skateboards, skates, etc..) is prohibited.
- Children may not run with sticks or use them for weapons, real or pretend.
- Pulling on clothing is prohibited.
- Throwing objects (including pine cones) is not permitted, other than balls thrown within the boundaries of ball games.
- Children are not allowed on campus after hours without parental supervision.
- Children are to stay within the boundaries as specified for their classes.
- On swings, pushing from behind only, stay off of and away from tree trunks while using swings, no "underdogs", and no pulling on ankles.
- Slides are down only, no climbing up allowed.
- Children are not to sit, climb, or walk on fences at any time.
- No standing on picnic tables.
- No tree climbing is allowed.
- Students are not to be on the playground without a teacher. If no teacher is out at the assigned times, the class teacher must accompany his/her class on to the playground until the person on duty arrives.
- Rough play is not permitted, even pretend rough play.
- Children in grades 3 and below may not play football, soccer or four square, but passing games with these kinds of balls is permitted for all ages.
- Tackle football and "wrap up" football are not allowed.
- Children are not allowed on the backside of rooms or inside classrooms without permission and supervision.

- No running on walkways on either side of the school.
- No gum is to be chewed on school property at any time, including before and after school.
- Children must stay in sight of their teacher at all times.
- Students are not allowed in the wooded area near the road parallel to the lower playground. They are not permitted on the road, except when accompanied by the teacher (for jogging, etc.)
- No jumping on bridge in the fenced playground.
- Dogs are not permitted on the Emerson Waldorf School campus

Physical Violence

We do not allow any kind of play that includes forceful or careless physical contact. This includes: hitting, pushing, shoving, butting, kicking, etc. Physical violence, no matter how minor, will be stopped immediately to prevent serious escalation. Fighting or injury may result in immediate suspension to emphasize the gravity of the misdeed. The College will be immediately involved to determine further action.

Termination of Students

The Emerson Waldorf School reserves the right to impose disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or dismissal, for neglect of school work, excessive absenteeism, poor student citizenship, including misconduct, or failure to follow the rules and regulations of the School. The determination of the School through the College of Teachers as to all such matters will be conclusive. The School retains the right to dismiss the student for causes that are deemed adequate to the School, including the failure of parents or guardians to observe the School's policies and rules.

Social Inclusion

EWS is in year two of a three-year long process of developing and implementing a school-wide social inclusion policy. This approach seeks to deepen and further already existing socially inspired practice within our school community. This process is carried largely by the Social Inclusion Coordinating Committee (SICG) which consists of a group of faculty and parent volunteers, in consultation with Kim John Payne, social inclusion educator.

One assumption of the social inclusion work is that social conflicts are a healthy part of life and offer opportunity to learn about ourselves and each other, and it is crucial that these conflicts be guided with consciousness, compassion and wisdom. Schools all across the country are beginning to recognize the damaging effects of bullying and teasing, both individual effects on the children, and effects on the communities' feelings of trust and safety within a school. There also is a budding recognition that blaming and punishing merely seeds underground conflict. The Social Inclusion approach is a no-blame approach that fosters an environment of openness, in which children, with the support and guidance of adults and older students, feel empowered to address bullying or teasing. The older students come from the 8th-12th grades and form the Student Social Action Committee (SAC). The SAC meet weekly to explore these social issues and to receive training in various social inclusion mediation and resolution skills. Each student is assigned to be a "buddy" student to a particular grade (grades 1-7) and seek to develop a supportive relationship with these students throughout the year. In this way, when social conflicts do arise, these older students, under the supervision of adults, are able to provide social support and guidance to the children involved. The ultimate goal of the Social Inclusion process is to develop an inclusive social inclusion policy that evolves out of the experiences and life of our community, and therefore is able to resonate with our own process of growth through social experience.

Teasing is defined as an expression of hurtful words, gestures, or actions that cause hurt feelings, exclusion, or alienation. We would like to develop a sense of community in which all students can unfold their highest potential in the areas of the Waldorf curriculum, and also in the realm of human relationships.

High School Student Drivers

Students may drive to school after they have registered with the office. To register, both student and parent(s) must read and sign the Student Driver Registration, and a photocopy of the student's most recent driver's license must be submitted to the Main Office.

Restrictions:

- Students must park in the lot across New Jericho Road from the lower school, and nowhere else.
- Students may not drive on campus during school hours—ever!
- Student drivers may not have other students as passengers unless the parents of both students grant written advance permission. These written agreements are kept in the HS Office for ready reference.

Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol and Weapons

The Emerson Waldorf School is a smoke free, drug and alcohol free, and weapon free campus

Students are asked to commit to abstention from drugs and alcohol. Parents are asked to support the school in its mission, and their children in their healthy, drug-free development.

- Prescription drugs should not be on campus unless the school has been notified and can monitor the student's dosage use. All prescription drugs must come to the appropriate office.
- Tobacco- Out of respect for healthy development of student minds and bodies, the school mission and the laws of our state, we demand that students – even those age 18 and above maintain the Emerson Waldorf School campus and all school related activities as tobacco-free.
- Weapons: In order to preserve the safety of everyone on campus, weapons of any kind are forbidden. This includes firearms, knives (including Swiss and Leatherman), slingshots, and any other items determined by faculty and staff.

IX. ADMINISTRATION

Admission Requirements and Process

Application Criteria

Application to Emerson Waldorf School is open to children whose families express an interest in the school and whose children meet the age requirement. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, or creed.

Emerson Waldorf School Admission Process

- Parents attend a Campus Tour, Open House or other campus event.
- Parents submit a completed application (including previous school records), student interview form and \$50 non-refundable fee.
- Parents ensure that teacher reference(s) from the current teacher(s) be completed and submitted to Emerson Waldorf School. Nursery accepts but does not require a reference. Grades Kindergarten through 5 need one reference, grades 6-8 requires 2 references and the high school requires 3 references.
- Parent-teacher interview and child visit date(s) will be set after Emerson Waldorf School receives all paperwork. Kindergarten candidates visit for one hour and grades 1-12 candidates visit for three days.

- Director of Enrollment informs family of acceptance or denial and provides additional paperwork, including the Enrollment Agreement.
- Family returns enrollment materials with deposit, fees, or tuition depending on the time of year, and receives a copy of the Parent Handbook and Directory before the student(s) attends class.
- Parents attend New Family Orientation.
- Priority is given to students already enrolled or whose siblings are enrolled at Emerson Waldorf School
- The Early Childhood (Nursery and Kindergarten) has a separate handbook that outlines additional requirements as mandated by the state of North Carolina.

Emerson Waldorf School Re-enrollment Policies

- All students re-enrolling must complete the process each year (in January). Re-enrollment forms are mailed in December. A nonrefundable deposit of \$500 per child (\$250 for those applying for tuition assistance) is required along with re-enrollment forms.

2009-2010 Finance Office Information - June 2009

Application Fee: \$50.00 non-refundable fee for applications for students not currently enrolled must accompany the application form.

Payment of Tuition: Families may opt between paying tuition for the entire year in advance and paying in twelve monthly installments.

Advance Payment: Families electing to make a single tuition payment will be eligible for a 4% discount. To make a single annual payment, please pay the amount shown on the Tuition Schedule in full to TADS by July 1st.

Monthly Payments: Families electing to pay monthly will be enrolled in the TADS Tuition Program. Monthly payments are due on the 10th of each month beginning in the June before the school year starts. TADS handles tuition payments through a coupon book, automatic draft, or credit card.

Proof of Payment: Parents are liable for proof of payment. Acceptable forms of proof include canceled checks, money order traces from the issuing agency, credit card statements, and School receipts (issued upon request for cash only). In matters of dispute, lack of proof of payment will be construed as non-payment.

Tuition Levels: Tuition levels for 2009-10, not including applicable sibling discounts, will be:

	<i>Base Tuition</i>	<i>Single payment - 4% discount</i>	<i>Monthly payment amount</i>	
			<i>Re-Enrolling Students</i>	<i>New Students</i>
Nursery 4-day	\$5,655	\$5429	\$429	\$409
Nursery 5-day	\$6,938	\$6,660	\$536	\$516
Kindergarten	\$8,774	\$8423	\$690	\$669
Grade School	\$12,360	\$11866	\$988	\$967
High School	\$13,845	\$13291	\$1,112	\$1,091

Tuition Deposit: The deposit for families enrolling their children for the first time at Emerson Waldorf School is \$750 per child; the deposit for re-enrolling families is \$500. The tuition deposit is non-refundable and non-transferable. The deposit will be applied fully towards next year's tuition provided the enrollment agreement and deposit are submitted by the re-enrollment deadline. If the enrollment agreement or deposit is received after the deadline, only half the deposit will be credited towards next year's tuition.

Sibling Discount: A discount of 10% is applied against the tuition for the younger siblings, enrolled in Grades 1-12, of children enrolled in Grade 1 or higher. The sibling discount does not apply to children enrolled in the Nursery or Kindergarten programs.

Late Fees: Monthly tuition accounts for which a payment is received 10 business days past due are assessed a \$29 late fee by TADS. Parents/guardians having difficulty paying tuition or other fees should contact the Finance Manager to make alternate arrangements. Also see the Emerson Waldorf School Arrears Policy.

Facilities Maintenance Fee: All families are required to pay a one-time \$1,300 Facilities Maintenance Fee for each student enrolled. We encourage families to pay for the Facilities Maintenance Fee in full when the first tuition payment is due. New students enrolling in the Early Childhood program have the option to make a smaller deposit towards their Facilities Maintenance Fee (\$200 for Nursery, \$300 for Kindergarten) rather than paying the entire fee immediately. For all new students, payment plans may be set up through the Finance Office. For complete details, families of new students should refer to the Facilities Maintenance Fee Description and Agreement found in your enrollment package.

AfterSchool and AfterCare Tuition: Payments for the AfterSchool program (Grades 1-8) and AfterCare (N-K) are in addition to the tuition payments and are billed in arrears, due monthly, at the first of the month. Separate enrollment agreements are available through the directors of each program. The 2009-2010 fees for these programs will be \$14/day for AfterCare (N-K), \$15/day for drop-in AfterSchool (Grades 1-8). Parents can choose to pre-register for AfterSchool (Grades 1-8) at a reduced rate of \$13/day. Late pick up fees of \$1/minute will be charged for late pick up from AfterSchool and AfterCare.

Late Pick Up Fees: Lower School children not picked up by regular dismissal time, will be enrolled into AfterSchool and charged accordingly. Early Childhood children who are not pre registered for AfterCare and not picked up by regular dismissal time, will not be enrolled into Aftercare, but will be charged a fee of \$1/minute.

PO Dues: Parent Organization dues for Emerson Waldorf School families will be included in the tuition on the enrollment agreement.

Direct Emerson Waldorf School Statements: Monthly statements are sent at the end of each month for amounts billed by Emerson Waldorf School (e.g., Facilities Maintenance Fees, AfterSchool) and are due no later than thirty days after the invoice date. Emerson Waldorf School accepts credit card payments for single-payment tuitions and will include a 5% transaction fee on those payments. This fee is subject to change without notice.

Returned Check Fee: There is a \$35 charge for all returned checks. This fee is subject to change without notice.

Tuition Adjustment: The School will consider Tuition Adjustment (TA) for families who demonstrate financial need; this adjustment applies to tuition only. It may not be possible, however, to accommodate every family's unique circumstance. Therefore, the School asks parents/guardians to pursue all other sources of income for tuition payments. Information concerning the Tuition Adjustment program, as well as applications, is available through the Director of Administration.

Withdrawal of an Enrolled Child: Intention to withdraw a child from the Emerson Waldorf School must be made in writing to the Director of Administration. The withdrawal will be effective as of the date of receipt of the letter or the last day of attendance, whichever is later.

Non-Discrimination Statement: The Emerson Waldorf School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition adjustment program, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

From the Emerson Waldorf School Board of Directors

On meeting our tuition obligations: Emerson Waldorf School Arrears Policy

The Emerson Waldorf School Board of Directors, which bears the responsibility for the financial health of the school, would like to see all families meet their tuition obligations in a timely fashion. From time to time, however, families in our community face financial hardships such as job loss, illness and so on. Frequently these hardships also impact the School in the form of missed or late tuition payments. Since Emerson Waldorf School depends on tuition for 90% of its income, the late payment of tuition may well impair our ability to pay teachers and staff and to run programs, ultimately adversely affecting the quality of our children's education.

A family knowing it will have difficulty meeting its tuition payments must write a letter to the Finance Director immediately. The school will work with the family to try to find a mutually agreeable way to meet the tuition obligation. As always, all financial information is confidential.

In the event a family falls into arrears with its tuition payments, and the Finance Director has not received written communication from the family, the following steps will be taken:

1. When a payment is 30 days past due, the Finance Director will send a statement to the family showing the past due amount.
2. When a payment is 60 days past due, the Finance Director will attempt to contact the family by email or telephone to see whether temporary payment restructuring is needed to restart the payments. At this time a letter can be sent that warns that full payment or a satisfactory payment agreement will be necessary to ensure the continued enrollment of the child(ren) involved.
3. If steps 1 and 2 fail to result in payment within one or two weeks, the Director of Administration will be notified of the delinquency and will also attempt to contact the family to effect temporary payment restructuring.
4. When payment is 75 days past due, the family will be required to keep the child(ren) at home. If a child is brought to school despite this requirement, the class teacher or high school adviser will send the child to the office and the parents will be called for immediate pick-up.

We do not want to lose a single family due to financial constraints. We all appreciate the struggle and sacrifice made by many families in order to provide their children with a Waldorf education. We encourage you therefore to be in contact with the School in the event you foresee having difficulty meeting your tuition schedule.

Transcripts

The Administrative Specialist handles records for Nursery through 12th Grade. The Administrative Specialist processes an official transcript that is requested from another school. The High School Guidance Counselor or Administrative Assistant processes High School transcripts for college applications. The "Request for Records" form must be received from the school to which the student is transferring. The High School also maintains full records on each of its students. No transcripts will be released until all financial obligations to the school have been met.

Development and Fundraising

Annual Fund

All independent schools must supplement their tuition income with a variety of fund raising opportunities. The most effective way for parents and others to invest in our school is through the Annual fund. Each year the school asks for a tax deductible gift to provide additional funds for our operating budget as well as for special projects. We ask that you carefully consider making a donation as it enables us to keep tuition increases to a minimum.

Events

Emerson Waldorf School also sponsors various fund raising events throughout the year which are opportunities for families and community members to enjoy social events while supporting the school. Examples of events include auctions and golf tournaments.

Scrip

Scrip are gift cards that are purchased by Emerson Waldorf School at a discount, then sold to you at face value. Scrip also involves registering with a vendor (supermarkets, online, etc.) so that the vendor donates a portion of your purchases to our school. By participating in the Scrip program, you will help raise money for the school simply by doing your regular shopping—no additional purchases are expected – making it easy for you to earn free money for Emerson Waldorf School! You can raise money for our school through these great options (don't forget to tell your friends and family as well!): Whole Foods: see Tara in the office to purchase \$20 gift certificates and Emerson Waldorf School earns 5%; Food Lion: link your MVP card at your local store or at <https://www.foodlion.com/IntheCommunity/ShopandShare/secure/RegisterMVPCards.asp>; Harris Teeter: Re-link your VIC card every August (Emerson Waldorf School #2513) at your local store or at http://www.harristeeter.com/community/together_in_education/link_to_your_school.aspx; Weaver Street Market: ask to assign your gift card to Emerson Waldorf School (#108) every time you recharge your card and Emerson Waldorf School will earn 5%; Target: go online to link your Target credit card to Emerson Waldorf School; Onecase.com (formerly schoolpop.com): log into this website to do your online shopping at well-known retailers like Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Gap, etc; GoodSearch.com: Link our school to this yahoo! internet search engine to earn money for Emerson Waldorf School every time you do an online search or even when you use their shopping option. Please feel free to contact Tara Furze (Finance Director and Kindergarten and 3rd grade parent) with any questions about this easy fundraiser!

Fundraising

Fundraising at Emerson Waldorf School is primarily meant to supplement the operating budget of the school and help offset costs so that tuition can be kept as low as possible. As a private school, we do not receive government support and we are committed to maintaining tuition levels and offering our education to families in need. The Annual Fund is our primary means of raising money for Emerson Waldorf School and offers donors the opportunity to contribute to the operating budget that effects every aspect of our school. Our school fundraisers reflect the values of Emerson Waldorf School, our appreciation of the time and energy of our community, and the basic needs of our school. We are committed to keeping fundraisers to a minimum and reviewing all events annually to determine if they remain profitable enough to justify continuing them. All fundraising at Emerson Waldorf School is for the benefit of the entire school and we strive for all classroom oriented fundraising to be distributed equally among the classes. In order to guarantee our curriculum from year to year and provide the children with appropriate field trips and supplies, it is sometimes necessary for parents to pay fees in addition to their tuition. Emerson Waldorf School is committed to keeping these fees to a minimum and to offsetting these costs through the Annual Fund.

In keeping with accepted business practices for schools, all funds generated by the school and/or its members must be accounted for and processed through the business office in order to maintain our status as a non-profit organization. This policy applies to our entire community of parents, teachers, staff, students and friends. Thank you for helping Emerson Waldorf School to maintain budgetary transparency and accountability.

- All fundraising must be conducted through the Development Office. Individual classroom/teacher needs should be communicated to the Development Director so that they can be considered within the larger Development Plan.
- All funds raised are considered “Development Income” and will be distributed through the business office of Emerson Waldorf School. This will allow the school to gain a more realistic understanding of the cost of all activities that take place at Emerson Waldorf School.
- Funds raised through all-school events/efforts (Holiday Faire, Gala, Scrip, Woodland Shop) are considered part of “Development Income” and offset the overall operating budget.
- All gifts for supplies, improvements to the classroom or other areas of the school must be processed through the Development Office. Monetary gifts for teachers are not tax-deductible unless the teacher has requested that parents contribute toward a specific school project. In this case, the donations should go through the Development Office and will be processed by the business office. This procedure guarantees accountability on the part of the school that the project will be completed and the opportunity for parents to receive a tax benefit.
- The Parent Organization is funded by a \$35 per family charge, which is included in the tuition. The school issues the appropriate amount to the PO (based on enrollment) at the beginning of each school year and this forms their primary budget. The Parent Organization runs up to 2 book fundraisers each year through the local bookstore of their choosing. They may also host adult education programs for parents and others in the community. All funds raised by the PO (above and beyond the parent fee) must be for projects that have been approved by the administration.
- Overnight Field trips are part of the curriculum in 3rd, 5th (Olympics) and 8th grade and in the High School. Parents must be advised of the cost of field trips at the beginning of the school year. A percent of Scrip proceeds may be used to offset the cost of class trips. The Development Office must approve individual class fundraising toward field trips. For further information see the “Emerson Waldorf School Field Trip Policy and Procedure” document.
- A “Fundraiser Request Form” must be completed for all fundraising activities (whether they are ongoing or one-time events). The form should be filled out by the contact person for the fundraiser. ALL fundraisers (even those that are well-established) must go through this process.

X: CURRICULUM

Nursery and Kindergarten Home Visits

Home visits are generally scheduled for new Nursery and/or Kindergarten students in our school. The home visit provides an opportunity for you and your child to meet one-on-one with your child’s teacher. This visit enables the teacher to deepen his work with your child by experiencing the home environment. Often the child will have some individual time with his or her teacher (showing their bedroom and outside play area). The children usually take great pride in showing their teacher their home, and the teacher leaves with a heart-warmed sense of who the child is and what his or her interests and passions are. There is also a time set aside for parents to speak privately with the teacher and ask questions or raise any concerns. The teamwork of parents and teachers greatly serves and nourishes the children, thereby creating a bridge from home to school.

A Typical Day in the Early Childhood Program

Daily Schedule Nursery

8:30- 9:40	Arrival; play and activity
9:40-9:55	Clean up
9:55-10:15	Circle
10:15-10:20	Bathroom and wash hands
10:20-10:45	Snack
10:45-11:00	Clean up and transition to outside
11:00-11:40	Outside
11:40-11:50	Inside and bathroom
11:50-12:05	Rest and story
12:05-12:10	Transition to an outside walk
12:10-12:20	Walk
12:20-12:30	Return to mushroom garden for Snack provided from home
12:30	Pick up

Daily Schedule Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten

8:00- 8:30	Arrival
8:30- 8:40	Morning circle - attendance, greeting and opening verse
8:40- 9:40	Teacher-directed activities - activity and learning centers open, free play
9:40- 9:50	Transition - room tidying
9:50-10:30	Mid-morning circle - teacher-directed group activity
10:30-10:40	Transition – restrooms and hand washing
10:40-10:50	Snack
10:50-11:00	Transition – clothes changing for outdoor play
11:00-11:30	Child -directed outdoor play
11:30-11:50	Transition-tidying outdoor area, clothes changing for indoor play, hand washing
11:50-12:00	Story
12:00-12:30	Lunch or Early Departure
12:30-2:00	Nap
2:00-2:30	Transition, snack and prepare to go outside
2:30-3:00	Outdoor play
3:00	Dismissal

Kindergarten to Grade 1 Progression

Admission to the Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten is not a guarantee of admission to first grade. A child should be six years of age by June 1 to be considered for first grade in the fall. Each spring the Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten teachers determine whether a child is eligible for promotion based on social, behavioral and developmental readiness. Of great importance are whether the child has had successful years during the Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten terms and whether the teachers and parents have a relationship that is consonant and mutually reinforcing for the child.

A Typical Day in Grades 1-8

A day in a Waldorf classroom begins with morning verse and circle that is led by the class teacher. During circle time, children engage in moving, singing, and reciting in unison. In this way they are preparing for the main lesson. The concentration achieved in the main lesson block allows each subject to be pursued in depth and with continuity. Always, whatever the subject, the teacher's goals are to engage the child's feelings and imagination so that the subject comes alive for each child in his or her own unique way.

Grade 1-5

8:30-10:30	The day begins with the Morning Verse followed by Circle.
Main Lesson	Circle: Content of the circle varies with the curriculum, the season, and the particular class. Circle time is a period of moving, singing, and reciting in unison. Students study a subject for 3 to 4 weeks.
10:30-11:00	Snack and Outside recess
11:05-11:50	Subject Classes (1): After main lesson, the day is divided in shorter periods and taught by subject teachers. Subjects available are: Spanish, German, Handwork, Clay, Beeswax Modeling, Woodworking, Music, Music (Strings), , Physical Education/Movement.
11:55-12:40	Subject Classes (2): The more artistic activities are taught during the middle of the day with the more physical activities assigned to the afternoon.
12:40-1:20	Lunch and Outside Recess
1:25-2:10	Subject Class (3)
2:15-2:55	Subject Class (4)
3:15	Dismissal

Grades 6-8

8:15-10:00	The day begins with the Morning Verse followed by Circle.
Main Lesson	Circle: Content of the circle varies with the curriculum, the season, and the particular class. Circle time is a period of moving, singing, and reciting in unison. Students study a subject for 3 to 4 weeks.
10:00-10:10	Snack and Outside recess
10:15-11:00	Subject Classes (1): After main lesson, the day is divided in shorter periods and taught by subject teachers. Subjects available are: Spanish, German, Handwork, Clay, Beeswax Modeling, Woodworking, Music, Music (Strings), Physical Education/Movement
11:05-11:50	Subject Classes (2): The more artistic activities are taught during the middle of the day with the more physical activities assigned to the afternoon.
11:55-12:40	Subject Class (3)
12:40-1:20	Lunch and Recess
1:25-2:10	Subject Class
2:15-3:00	Subject Class
3:15	Dismissal:

Topics Commonly Taught in Each Grade

Grade 1

- ❖ Fairy Tales and Poems with strong rhythm
- ❖ Form Drawing, drawing and painting give way to letters, simple words, speech exercises, phonetics, and short plays
- ❖ Math: whole numbers 4 rules (0-24) counting 1-144, mental arithmetic
- ❖ Science: Nature studies

Grade 2

- ❖ Symmetry: mirror drawing, form drawing
- ❖ Fables, legends of the saints, local folklore, American Indian stories
- ❖ Begin reading from children's own written Main lesson book, plays and speech work rhyming words
- ❖ Math: whole numbers, times tables, number patterns, carrying and borrowing, situation problems, time, money
- ❖ Science: Nature studies

Grade 3

- ❖ Form drawing as an introduction to cursive writing

- ❖ Biblical stories as part of ancient history, American Indian stories, fables, reading from Main lesson book, poetry
- ❖ Grammar: structure of a sentence, verbs, adjectives, simple spelling and writing
- ❖ Math: whole numbers, times tables, number patterns, measurement, prime numbers
- ❖ Practical studies: house building, farming, and clothing

Grade 4

- ❖ Geometric drawing (freehand), form drawing, interlocking forms
- ❖ Local history through geography, Norse sagas, poetry, alliteration
- ❖ Grammar: verb tenses, prepositions, plurals, abbreviations, personal pronouns, adverbs, oral reports
- ❖ Writing: compositions form and content
- ❖ Math: arithmetic operations, word problems, times tables, averages, long division, fractions, factoring, proofs
- ❖ Geography: map making, North Carolina
- ❖ Science: zoology (human and animal)

Grade 5

- ❖ Free geometric drawing, dynamic drawing
- ❖ Culture of Ancient India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece
- ❖ Greek mythology and early Greek history
- ❖ Grammar: active/passive verbs, punctuation, syntax, subject/predicate
- ❖ Writing: composition with emphasis on descriptions, book reports(oral and written), letter writing
- ❖ Geography: U.S.
- ❖ Science: Botany
- ❖ Math: decimals, fractions, mixed numbers, reciprocals

Grade 6

- ❖ Exact geometric construction, geometric string designs, mosaic pictures
- ❖ The founding of Rome through the monarchy, republic, and empires
- ❖ Grammar: subjunctive mood, conditional sentences, transitive/intransitive verb, possessive/objective nouns, phrases and clauses, sentence diagramming, review 8 parts of speech
- ❖ Writing: composition with emphasis on exposition, paragraphs, narration: descriptive, expository, contrasts, outlining
- ❖ Geography: Canada, Latin and South America
- ❖ Science: physics (sound, heat, light, magnetism, static electricity), geology
- ❖ Math: mathematical sentences, interests, profit, loss, percentage, money, proportion, estimation, exchange

Grade 7

- ❖ Exact geometric drawing, 2-dimensional, to theorem of Pythagoras, areas of squares, perspective,
- ❖ History: 1400-1700; Age of Exploration, Age of Discovery, Reformation, Renaissance, biographies
- ❖ Arthurian legends, historical novels, humorous stories, tales of adventure, poetry, ballads
- ❖ Grammar: review all grammar
- ❖ Writing: all blocks have original writing, summaries, longer essays and comparisons, research papers, newspaper reporting, note taking
- ❖ Geography: Africa, Europe, maps- tides, reading
- ❖ Science: Chemistry (combustion, chemical transformation, acids, bases, salts), Physiology (9 systems, nutrition), Astronomy
- ❖ Math: Business math, graphing, perimeters, roots, pre-algebra, areas, powers, formulae

Grade 8

- ❖ Math: practical mathematics, percent, signed numbers, equations, number bases, set concepts, platonic solids.
- ❖ Exact geometric construction: 3-dimensional drawing, theorems, and volumes of solids, laws of logic, solid geometry, algebra, and platonic solids
- ❖ History: 1700 to the present; the Industrial Revolution to modern day Shakespeare

- ❖ Poetry: epic and dramatic
- ❖ Review Grammar
- ❖ Writing: All blocks have original writing, practical writing, study short stories
- ❖ Geography: Asia, Australia, and Antarctica
- ❖ Science: Chemistry (metals, gases), Physiology (bones, muscles, eye, body chemistry), Physics (sound, heat, current electricity, hydraulics) and Meteorology

Emerson Waldorf High School

At its core, Waldorf education is based on a holistic understanding of human development that takes into account the gradual emergence of capacities for thinking, feeling and doing. All high school students take nearly all the courses, including all four major sciences, English, math, foreign language, music, physical education classes, and a wide range of fine, performing, and practical arts. As students progress together through the challenges of these diverse offerings, a sense of community emerges built on recognition and respect for individual strengths and differences.

As they move through their education, Waldorf students learn about the art of self-expression – through intensive writing across the curriculum, discussion in seminar style classes, drama, song, drawing, metalwork and instrumental music. As a result of these experiences, four important capacities are nurtured – to be interested, engaged, compassionate and enthusiastic. Regardless of chosen profession or path, these capacities help each person to find their own way towards a meaningful and successful life. Emerson Waldorf School does not designate specific courses as AP or honors, and does not rank students.

Characteristics of the High School:

- Small class sizes which create mentoring relationships with dedicated faculty
- Advising system that promotes student support and responsibility, and cultivates positive home and school communication
- High degree of parent involvement
- Student evaluation by letter grade and individual narrative
- Block scheduling with a unique format that promotes active learning, creativity and synthetic thinking
- Dramatic performance opportunities for all students

High School Curriculum

A student at Emerson Waldorf High School will take a combination of Main Lesson Blocks, full-year courses, semester electives and art and movement blocks.

The day begins with all students and faculty gathering together for attendance, announcements and verse. Academic work is emphasized in classes before lunch. Snack and lunch periods provide an opportunity to go outside and socialize within designated areas. Afternoon classes focus on artistic work and physical education.

Main Lesson Blocks are a key component of Waldorf education. They are mandatory for all students and are grouped by grade level. Each class is approximately 3 weeks in length. The purpose of these classes is to explore one subject intensively through lecture, discussion, written and artistic projects. They are offered in the sciences, mathematics, literature, and history.

High School Daily Schedule

8:10	Morning Verse, attendance, announcements
8:20	Main Lesson Block (MLB)
10:00	Snack/Outside Break
10:15	Track Class (Music, Math, English, Foreign Language, Electives, American Studies)
12:40	Lunch and Outside Break
1:25	Art, Movement, or Social Learning Elective
3:15	Clean- up, Verse, Dismissal

“With Waldorf education there is an integration of subject matter so that all children use heart, head, and hands in their education—a complete education, if you will.”

– Dr. Robert Peterkin, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University

Music Program

Music is a large and integral part of the curriculum at Emerson Waldorf School. Every student in grades 1 through 12 participates in music. Because regular, earnest practice at home is necessary, every family must make a sincere commitment to support their child’s musical success. This requires including a regular practice time as part of your family’s daily schedule, acquiring and maintaining instruments, supplies and music books and making our performances a priority in your family calendar. Private lessons are very strongly encouraged for all instrumental students and may be required for those students who do not progress as quickly as the group.

The children play lyres and flutes in grades 1 through 3. The school supplies these instruments and the children are not expected to practice at home. In fourth grade every student begins playing the violin, viola, or cello. Instrumental music classes continue through twelfth grade. In sixth grade, Emerson Waldorf School students continue to study their chosen string instrument or may change to an orchestral wind instrument (flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, etc). Beginning in fifth grade, all students also participate in one of the school choruses. Our high school program continues the instrumental and choral work laid down in the early grades, but offers some choice through electives. Our after school music programming compliments the school day program: chamber string ensembles and jazz band are two examples of our extracurricular music offerings.

Parents are expected to supply an instrument for their child as well as any required supplies and method books. Emerson Waldorf School offers low cost rentals for instruments; speak with the music director about instrument rental.

All fifth through twelfth grade students perform at least twice a year. The required dress for fifth and sixth grade students is to wear white dress tops and dark blue dress pants or skirt with dark dress shoes and socks. 7th and 8th grade students wear the same, except they wear black pants or skirt. Skirt length should conform to the school dress code. High school students’ dress varies for performances, but is generally semi-formal.

Art

The Emerson Waldorf School also offers a variety of art programs. Art is integral to the curriculum throughout the school (Nursery through 12th grade). They may include: drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, block printing, calligraphy, bookbinding/paper arts, basket making, pottery, and weaving,

Practical Arts

The Practical Arts program exists in Waldorf schools to develop the “hands on” aspect of each student’s soul. Each human being is born with the desire to learn and create through watching and touching, then

doing. Our students begin with the experience of soft pliable beeswax and clay. From 6th grade - 12th grade, students attend the wood shop once per week and the artistic mediums become more solid: soft wood, hardwood, copper, plaster of Paris, and iron. The students learn first how to form the materials, then how to join multiple pieces together. An emphasis is put on making something practical that is also beautiful. Also, we emphasize exactness and accuracy as well as safety and cleanliness in the shop.

Handwork

Handwork is an integral part of the Waldorf Curriculum taught as a subject lesson for one hour and a half each week for every grade. Skills such as knitting, crocheting, hand sewing, embroidery, cross-stitch, felting, doll making, pattern making, and machine sewing are taught in grades one through eight. The students develop manual dexterity, patience, and coordination, while developing appreciation for natural materials, design, and a personal sense of accomplishment. Handwork is also an important part of the Kindergarten day. The High School student is able to take what they have learned in the lower grades as a foundation to develop more specialized craft skills.

Physical Education

The movement classes are a part of the curriculum from 1st to 12th grade to develop strength, coordination, spatial awareness, and healthy cooperative and competitive play with others. Cooperative games begin in the early grades and evolve into rhythmical exercises and sports in the middle school years. As the student enters 7th grade, students performed exercises that are concerned with heaviness and lightness, tumbling, and free gymnastics. By high school, students gain experience with vertical through gymnastics, tumbling, and circus.

Grades 1-4: Circle, ring, line, and singing games, jump rope, hopscotch, running, jumping and throwing.

Grade 5: Tumbling, building human pyramids, original Olympic sports such as javelin, discus, shot put, high and long jump.

Grades 6-8: Team sports (kickball, softball, kings, and basketball)

Grades 9-12: Gymnastics with apparatus, juggling, balancing, tumbling, stilt-walking, expressive dance. *Our school offers a sports program for the Middle School (grades 6-8) and High School. Sports we offer include co-ed soccer (High School), cross-country, and basketball.*

Foreign Language

Spanish and German are taught in grades 1 through 8. Foreign languages are taught in the high school as part of credits necessary for graduation.

XI. ANNUAL EVENTS

The Rose Ceremony

On the first and last day of school each year, we hold the Rose Ceremony. The whole school joins together in welcoming the 1st graders, as their Kindergarten teachers lead them across the Rainbow Bridge to greet their new, 1st Grade teacher with a handshake and receive a rose from a 12th grader. Each Class Teacher then tells a story of the curriculum the class will be covering that year, and the children depart with their teachers for their first 1/2-day of a new grade. At the end of the year graduating seniors receive a rose from first grade students.

Holiday Faire

Seasonal crafts and food, handmade toys for sale, singing around the campfire, puppet shows, hayrides and more can all be found at the Holiday Festival. We invite the public as well as the Emerson Waldorf School community to join together in celebrating the harvest with activities linked to the season. Activities include making bird feeders, candles, pressing cider, and making lanterns to use in the Lantern Walk, which follows the festival.

Grandparents and Special Friends Day

Grandparents are a very special part of our Emerson Waldorf School family. Each year we honor them on one day in Spring, with a reception, visits to classrooms to see their grandchildren learning, and a special Assembly at which the students demonstrate some of the things they have been doing in class this year.

May Day

The May Day is a rite of spring at Emerson Waldorf School, and includes a few seasonal activities as well as singing and dancing around the May Pole dressed in white.

Assemblies

Several times each year the whole Emerson Waldorf School community gathers to watch each class present some of their class work to each other, their parents and friends. This provides a wonderful opportunity for parents to see what goes on in the classroom, for students to develop confidence and pride in their accomplishments, for older students to recall on their younger years, and for younger children to anticipate journeys yet to come.

Graduation

Each year we celebrate the promotion of our 8th graders with a ceremony to honor their achievements.

We commemorate the graduation of our senior class (12th Grade) with a ceremony sharing and reflecting on memories and accomplishments as these young adults leave us for the larger world. This is an opportunity for the whole community to say goodbye, and to honor the seniors as individuals and as a group. A reception is usually held after the ceremony, to which all community members are invited.

“My daughter's experience at the Waldorf School has been both exciting and mind opening. I hope that more people can make Waldorf education available to their children.” – Russell Schweickart, NASA astronaut (Apollo 9) and technology advisor, 1963–1979

XII: FESTIVALS

Throughout the year, we celebrate festivals to connect us with the cycles of nature, establish a yearly rhythm for the children, and strengthen our community. Festivals help us to nourish our souls through the sharing of stories, food, songs and activities linked to the seasons and expressed with beauty and reverence. In addition to the community-wide festivals listed here, teachers celebrate other festivals in the classroom, including those connected to different cultures being studied or the religious traditions of the students in the class.

Michaelmas

Like most Waldorf Schools, Emerson Waldorf School traditionally celebrates the festival of Michaelmas on September 29. The day is filled with strong imagery such as a fiery dragon being conquered by the heavenly hero St. Michael. The children dress in red shirts, share presentations, plays, verses and songs, and eat dragon-bread.

The purpose of this festival is to celebrate human will, inner strength, courage and initiative. It serves as a symbolic reminder for the whole community that we each should strive to overcome our lower impulses: fear, vengefulness, wrath, anxiety, selfishness, and laziness.

Summer is a time of expansion and out-flowing. Flowers bloom, plants burgeon and even the clouds billow upward into towering cumulonimbus formations, ready to rupture as dramatic late afternoon

thunderstorms. As summer wanes, the nights begin to cool and the days grow shorter. Our world seems to contract; as a part of our world we also feel the desire to go to sleep. The image of Michael doing battle with a dragon represents our need for strength and courage against our lower, animal impulses at this time of year. The strong, willful iron of Michael's sword acts as an antidote to this desire to fall asleep and goads us to face the feeling of emptiness before the dying world of nature. It is this spirit of resolve and inner warmth that we seek to carry with us as we begin the school year.

Lantern Walk

Each November we have a Lantern Walk to celebrate Martinmas, a festival of inner light in the outer darkness of the approaching winter. St. Martin was a soldier in Rome the 4th century. Legend says that one wintry night he met a poor beggar, half-naked and freezing. Martin removed the heavy military cloak from his shoulders and, drawing his sword, cut it in two, and gave half to the beggar. That night, Christ appeared to Martin in a dream, wrapped in the same piece of cloak Martin had given the beggar, and said: "Martin has covered me with this garment." Martin became the patron saint of beggars, drunks and outcasts, dedicating his life to assisting pariahs. Celebrating Martinmas at Emerson Waldorf School serves as a reminder that each of us has a divine spark that we must ferry out into the world and share with others. The children hear the story of St. Martin, sing songs and, as darkness falls, venture out into the night with their lanterns walking along a path lit with glowing luminaries, carefully carrying their lanterns in a mood of quiet reverence. The symbolic act brings home the deeper truth in the words of Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism (563-483 B.C.) "There isn't enough darkness in all the world to snuff out the light of one little candle."

Spiral of Light

As the days grow noticeably shorter, the frosty winter nights approach their longest, and we all begin to yearn for the light, which so recently illuminated our lives. To symbolize this yearning, each December, the Kindergarten and Grades 1-3 participate in a Spiral of Light. In one of the classrooms, a path is laid out of green boughs of evergreens. Moss, crystals, shells are placed on the greenery and stars of gold shine inside the path. A single candle in the center of the spiral lights the room. Soft music sets the mood that brings the adults (parents) into the room to sit and watch their children walk the path of the spiral.

The evening begins with each teacher telling his or her class a story in an adjacent classroom. Everyone quietly walks into the room and is seated on benches surrounding the Spiral. As each child, in turn, approaches the entrance of the spiral they receive a white candle in a shiny red apple, which is carried to the center of the spiral. One at a time the children walk to the center. The kindergarteners are shepherded by the teacher but children in the grades go by themselves. They light their own candle from the center candle and then return outward. On the journey back they place their candle and apple on a gold star. When all the children have walked the path the whole spiral is aglow with lights. The music softly continues as the children quietly leave the room. Finally, the apples and candles are gathered and brought outside to be shared with the children before they depart.

Shepherds Play

A long-standing tradition in many Waldorf Schools, including Emerson Waldorf School, is the performance of The Shepherd's Play, usually performed at the Winter Assembly immediately before the Winter Break. The tradition of the play itself dates back to medieval Europe and it is one of a cycle of three plays: The Paradise Play, The Shepherd's Play, and The Three Kings Play. The cycle was kept alive into the 17th century on the island of Oberufer on the Danube where the small island community formed the acting company. With great fanfare and revelry, the company would process through the town in song, leading the townspeople to the performances. The plays were an all community celebration, and we have continued that spirit of celebration as our school performs the Shepherd's Play as a gift to the Emerson Waldorf School community.

The story is a familiar one, for it is a Nativity play, told from the point of view of the shepherds. Within this tale we meet archetypal characters, who through their experiences are called upon to act out of their noble nature. These rough, simple folk, in the growing darkness of the long winter nights, find the spark of light, which shines forth through fraternity and carries hope for the future. It is a tale of personal transformation leading from earthly baseness to enlightened inspiration.

XIII. PARENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Sleep

So that your child may get the full benefit of Waldorf education, parents should ensure that their children get enough sleep. Regularity in the lives of children is important – regular bedtimes, regular mealtimes, and basic rhythm are essential. Ask your class teacher if you have any questions concerning these matters.

Monday

It's a good idea to plan your weekend activities so that you are home early on Sunday and your child can have a "recovery time." Your child can't be alert and responsive on Monday morning when he spent a full weekend of lively, stimulating, tiring activities and had no time to recover. The lesson planned for Monday morning is crucial to all lessons taught the remainder of the week. Your child needs to be alert and awake for it, or the child will not be able to receive it properly.

Lunches and Snacks

Please send nutritious snacks and lunches for grade school children. Remember that the school day is long and busy for the growing children and that they need an ample amount of healthy food to sustain them through the day. Please do not send candy, soda, and foods high in refined sugar. Nutritious snacks are provided for Nursery and Kindergarten children. Snacks include natural juices, whole grain breads, nuts, seeds, raw fresh vegetables, and on occasion, delicacies prepared by the children in class.

Birthdays: Nursery - 8th Grade

A child's birthday is a time for celebrating within the class. Every effort is made to celebrate the child's birthday on that very special day, however, should the birthday fall on a weekend or during vacation time, arrangements should be made for a mutually convenient day. Celebrations are defined by the teacher in each grade. Please consult your child's teacher before the celebration. Usually a shared snack from home accompanies the birthday celebrations throughout the grades. Highly refined sugar products should be kept to a minimum. Please do not send invitations for home birthday parties to school for distribution; mailing addresses are in the parent directory.

School Supplies

Teachers carefully plan and select appropriate supplies for each grade level. Your teacher will notify you of any extra supplies your child may need. The school provides most supplies. We will have some string and wind instruments available to rent and a list of area music stores that rent or sell string instruments.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned by the teachers to enrich the curriculum of each class. Volunteer parent drivers provide transportation. All students being transported to and from Waldorf school activities must wear seat belts. The teacher will provide special health and permission forms. All expenses are the responsibility of the parents.

Requirements for Volunteer Drivers at Emerson Waldorf School

- Background and DMV check- one form to be filled out in the office at least one week in advance. Emerson Waldorf School cannot allow someone to drive if they have had a violation or accident within the last five years.
- Copy of your current driver's license.
- Copy of your current insurance card (if you are only driving students in your own car).
- Scheduled bus training with Ian Ostrowski, Facilities Manager (for people who are not experienced drivers of the bus). The bus may not be hard to drive, but please keep in mind the enormous responsibility involved with driving 13 children.

The school asks that everyone come to the office to confirm that they are authorized to be a volunteer driver at least one week before your scheduled trip. Please keep in mind that your driver's license or insurance card may expire between trips so we may need a copy of the updated items before you can drive.

While this is very important for the safety of our children, it is also required by our insurance company. Please feel free to contact the administration with further questions.

What Can Parents Do to Support Emerson Waldorf School

The healthy future of our school depends on vital enrollment: full enrollment is the most important form of long-range financial health for the school. Even with an extensive community outreach program, word of mouth from our present families remains the most effective means to increasing interest in our school.

Opportunities for Parent Participation

- All parents belong to the Emerson Waldorf School Parent Organization.
- Parents receive a weekly newsletter containing school events, updates and community information. Emerson Waldorf School strongly encourages parents to attend class meetings. The meetings provide school and pedagogical information and promote parent-teacher as well as parent-parent communication and relationship building.
- Grandparent's Day is held annually on the day of the spring assembly.
- Examples of volunteer opportunities are as follows:
 - School grounds workdays
 - Holiday Faire and May Day celebration
 - Classroom projects
 - School planning and implementation teams
 - Share skills, knowledge and cultural celebrations with the teacher and class
- The PO and other Emerson Waldorf School related committees host various classes, workshops, study groups and lectures for parents throughout the year.
- Parents are encouraged to attend Waldorf Education Day, a full day Saturday workshop held on campus each January.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences are held twice a year during fall and spring. Parents are expected to attend both conferences. The teachers, either in the main office or outside the Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten classroom, post sign-up sheets. Parents are asked to sign up within one week of the posting. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that any missed conference is made up at a later date. Reports/conference notes are signed by both the teacher and parent(s). These conference notes are then filed in each student's record. High School parents will have conferences scheduled with their student's advisor.
- If parents have a concern or complaint about a policy or procedure, they are first encouraged to bring the issue to the Teacher. If continued assistance is still sought, the parents should contact the Administrator or Faculty Chair who will then determine who should handle the issue.

Emerson Waldorf School has the College of Teachers who can hear complaints/issues and address it in a timely fashion if it has pedagogical implications. The Board of Directors may be involved if the issue involves legal or financial considerations. You can always get a Communication Process Packet in the Main Office. (See “Conflict Resolution Process for Parents below.)

Support your teachers

- Help your child to be prepared for school.
- Help your child show respect for his or her teacher by being prompt each day. Arrive on time or a little early with necessary school materials.
- Attend Class meetings to learn how to help with your child’s education and development.
- Attend parent/ teacher conferences two times per year.
- If you need an individual conference, please make an appointment with your teacher outside of instructional time. This will allow both parents and teachers a more focused discussion.
- Work with teachers to facilitate a productive learning experience.

Provide a home environment conducive to learning: a quiet place to complete homework, adequate nutrition and rest, and limited exposure to media experiences during the school year.

- Communicate with teachers any significant happenings in your child’s life that will impact his/her school experiences. When recommended, collaborate with teachers for tutor assistance or additional evaluations that may be necessary for the success of your child’s learning.

XIV: CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR PARENTS

The Emerson Waldorf School operates without a principal or headmaster. Decisions are made collegially among the Board, College of Teachers and Administration. This can make the decision making process slow and convoluted. Individuals who have grievances are expected to be responsible for seeing their concerns resolved. We are hoping that this new process creates guidelines for effective problem solving.

The School Administrator is the person who coordinates formal communications at Emerson Waldorf School.

If a concern is not resolved at one level, or either party is uncomfortable with this approach, the parties involved may move to the next level and request assistance from the Administrator.

If resolution is still not achieved, the parties involved may request that a mediator facilitate a meeting with the parties in conflict. If mediation fails to resolve a concern, the matter may be taken to the COC which will appoint an arbitrator to make a decision. The progressive levels of communication can be summarized as follows:

Level 1, Non-facilitated, direct communication between parties in conflict

Level 2, Communication facilitated by Faculty, College member or Administrator

Level 3, Communication facilitated by mediator

Level 4, COC appoints an arbitrator to make decision

Please contact the lower school office for a Communication Process Packet.

XV. RESOURCES

AFFILIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

AWSNA, the Association of Waldorf Schools in North America,
WECAN, the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America
International Association of Waldorf Kindergartens
Southern Association of Independent Schools
North Carolina Association of Independent Schools
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Books of interest:

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

The Children's Year by Cooper, Frynes-Clinton and Rowling
Festivals, Family and Food by Diana Carey and Judy Large
Toymaking with Children by Freya Jaffke
Painting with Children by Brunhild Miller
Dumbing Us Down by John Taylor Gatto
Towards Wholeness by M.C. Richards
Simple Environmental Activities for Young Children by Carol Petrash
Festivals Together—A Guide to Multi-Cultural Celebration by S. Fitzjohn, M. Weston and J. Large

EDUCATION AND CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Incarnating Child by Joan Salter
Phases of Childhood by B.C.J. Lievegoed
Children at Play by Heidi Britz-Crecelius
Childhood by Caroline von Heydebrand
The Way of the Child by A.C. Harwood
Understanding Young Children and Rudolf Steiner Education by Francis Edmunds
School as a Journey by Torin Finser
Teaching as a Lively Art by Marjorie Spock
Waldorf Schools, Vol. I and II by Ruth Pusch
Rudolf Steiner Education and the Developing Child by Willi Aeppli

FAMILY LIFE

You Are Your Child's First Teacher by Rahima Baldwin
Lifeways Working with Family Questions by Gundrun Davy and Bons Voors
Between Form and Freedom—A Practical Guide to the Teenage Years by Betty Staley
Seven Times the Sun—Guiding Children Through Rhythms of the Day, by Shea Darian
Who's Bringing Them Up? Television and Child Development by Martin Large
Parenting, A Path through Childhood by Dotty Turner Coplen
Raising a Daughter, Raising a Son by Jeanne and Don Elium

FOUNDATIONS OF WALDORF EDUCATION BY RUDOLF STEINER

Education as an Art by Rudolf Steiner and Others
Education of the Child
Prayers for Mothers and Children
The Four Temperaments
Study of Man
Practical Advice to Teachers
Discussions with Teachers
The Kingdom of the Childhood

Deeper Insights into Education
Education and Modern Spiritual Life

These books are available from:

The lower school office and kindergarten parent lending libraries

Anthroposophic Press

PO Box 960

Herndon, VA 20172-0960

(800) 856-8664

Mercury Press

At the Fellowship Community

(845) 425-9357

Sunbridge College Book Store

260 Hungry Hollow Road

Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

(914) 425-0983